that is more constructively and truly interdependent. It is a wonderful opportunity. It is also a profound responsibility. For 8 years, I have done what I could to lead my country down that path. I think for the rest of our lives, we had all better stay on it.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:08 p.m. in Butterworth Hall at the University of Warwick Arts Center. In his remarks, he referred to Sir Brian Follett, vice chancellor, Sir Shridath Ramphal, chancellor, and Lord Robert Skidelsky, professor of economics, University of Warwick; Sir Follett's wife, Lady Deb Follett; and Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom and his wife, Cherie.

Exchange With Reporters Aboard Air Force One
December 14, 2000

[*The President's remarks are joined in progress*]

European Union

The President. Seriously, what we were just talking about—maybe I should make the general point I was going to just make. She said it was so interesting to her when she goes to Europe, people are so interested in these decisions, and Americans don't seem to be. But the truth is, this is their lives, you know. I mean, for people in the Republic, they live with sort of an open wound with all this trouble in Northern Ireland. But for people in Northern Ireland, it's just being able to get in your car and not worrying about going down the street and having a bomb go off. It's worth a lot.

So, it matters to them that—some people, you know, questioned over the last 8 years whether—first of all, whether I should have done that, because it made the British mad, eventually. But in the end, they were very glad we did. But when the United States is involved, even in a small place, it has big psychological significance to the entire Continent. It makes a big difference.

I mean, it's obvious what was at stake in Bosnia and Kosovo, but in Northern Ireland it said to the rest of Europe that the U.S. still cares about Europe; we're still involved with them. So it has an effect in helping us, because we have all kinds of problems with Europe. You know, we have all these tough environmental issues related to the trade issues and then the trade issues themselves and all that, and we will have. And they're going through all their growing pains.

You saw they just had this real tough meeting in, I think, Nice, where they were arguing over how to aggregate the votes and whether Germany should have more because they have more people. And they argue they should have more, because they have more people and they have to pay more money. So, if they have to pay more money and have more people, they ought to have money.

And then you've got France, Italy, and Britain all at the same population. They're all at 60 million, and then it's a pretty good drop down to Spain. I think Spain has got like 40 million.

Q. But no recounts from what I understand.

The President. No. They all use hand ballots, pencil ballots. So go ahead, what were you going to say about Ireland?

Northern Ireland Peace Process

Q. If you wanted to give some advice about Northern Ireland——

The President. To President-elect Bush?

Q. Yes, on Ireland. The people there are faced with a significant amount—[*inaudible*]—on Gerry Adams. What was the makeup? How did you come to that?

The President. Well, I reached the conclusion that it was worth the risk for two reasons. And the risks were two. One is, would it do irreparable damage to our relationship with Great Britain? And two, would the IRA really declare a cease-fire and honor it, or would it look like I gave a visa to him, and they were still getting money out of Boston and New York for bad purposes that were still going on?

On the second, I felt based on people we knew in Ireland, starting with the then-*Taoiseach*, Albert Reynolds, that they would honor their word, because it was in their interest

to do so, and they had made a decision to try to work out a peace.

And on the first, I felt that the relationship between the U.S. and Britain was so strong, and we agreed on so many foreign policy issues related to Europe—like the expansion of NATO, the importance of trying to solve the Balkans crisis, just to mention two—that if I put a lot of my time and effort into going to the U.K. and working at it, that we could work through it. And it turned out to be a good gamble.

And I had actually quite a good relationship with John Major. I mean, the British press just killed us for a while, and they said, "Clinton did this because Major and the Tories supported President Bush, helped—look at Clinton's passport file." It was all ridiculous. I didn't give a rip about that.

Q. But what finally made you——

The President. So my advice to the President-elect, I think—and I really haven't had a chance to talk about it—is just sort of stick with the policy and work with the leaders, because now, you know, you have a consensus in Great Britain and in Ireland for continuing to work with the parties in Northern Ireland. And they will have to make—there will be specific calls along the way they will have to make. Maybe they will make them the same way I would; maybe they wouldn't. But that's not as important as the general trend there, because, you know, there are some problems that are unresolved where time is running against you, so you might as well go ahead and bite the bullet and do it.

I feel very strongly about that in the Middle East. They need to reach some sort of new accommodation; that is, we have come to the end of the road of the September '93 agreement, plus the Wye accord, plus incremental measures. They need a new understanding. They need to—they've got to either resolve it all or at least decide what the next step up is, so they can get back to living in peace and the Palestinian economy can start to grow.

With Ireland, the Irish Republic is the fastest growing economy in Europe. Northern Ireland is now the fastest growing part of the U.K. They come in from a low base, but they're catching up in a hurry.

There was a big headline, I don't know if you saw it, in one of the papers during our trip that said that there had been 600 million pounds in American investment alone in Northern Ireland, where it only has a million-and-a-half people, in the 5 years since I went there the first time.

So, in Ireland, all you got to do is just keep it going because the people will stay a little ahead of the politicians. The people will not let the politicians crater this deal as long as their lives are getting better.

Q. Have you heard back from Belfast, sir, and has your trip had its desired effect?

The President. Well, they all were happy with it. You know, that is, all the parties that are actually involved in the Government and the peace process support the Good Friday accords, are all happy, and we're inching along. And they may get another breakthrough. The point is that the atmosphere was much better.

I saw Sky TV. That's the European—the way they played the Northern Ireland event—they had a little clip from me; they had little deal about my swansong in Ireland and blah, blah, blah; and then they have a little clip from me, a little clip from Tony Blair; and then they had a great line from David Trimble's speech about how he wouldn't let us go back to the—he had that one poetic line about the dark and the hatred.

Q. Grudges.

The President. All that, that line. They played that on television. Well, that's a huge deal because it reassures the Protestants that they're supported, and it's immensely reassuring to the Catholic community that, you know, he's still—even if they disagree with some particular position that he's taking, that he's still on the track.

And so my belief is that they will eventually work this out if they just give it enough time, because they're doing better every day. That's the right strategy. So, I don't think this is going to be a difficult challenge for President Bush.

Q. [*Inaudible*].

The President. That's entirely up to all of them, starting with him. I don't think it's—I think the Irish—a lot of them asked me about it, but it's only because they know me and they're comfortable. And once he gets in there and has a good policy, they'll be fine.

So, if they ever needed me, I would do it. But I think, on balance, it's not going to be essential. They'll do just fine with this.

Q. What do you see when people—when the Irish, for instance, asked you to stay involved, or in the Middle East, a lot of people have suggested you should stay involved? Is that an apprehension on their part just about the

change? I mean, you also have a unique relationship with the people.

The President. I think that always happens. And we're going to have a good transition. Al Gore made a fabulous speech last night. The country will get into it. We'll adjust very quickly, and so will all of them. They'll all adjust quickly. So it will be fine. I think, you know, it will just be fine.

The essential thing about democracy is that no one is indispensable. That's why you have a system like this. And you know, whenever you're the first person to do something, people have a feeling about you. That's a nice thing for me, personally. And if I can ever be helpful in some—you know, if your President asks you to do something, you do it. Bob Dole was on television last night talking about how I had asked him to go to Bosnia and Kosovo and things we had done together.

But it's not important. The most important thing is that we have a good transition and that he get off to a good start. The rest of it will take care of itself.

Conversation With President-Elect Bush

Q. Can we ask what you said to the President-elect?

The President. I congratulated him, and I told him that I thought he made a fine statement last night, and I thought that Al had made a fine statement, and that I look forward to seeing him. He said he was coming early next week, and we would get together. That's all.

Conversation With Vice President Gore

Q. What about Vice President Gore? Did you have to console him at all?

The President. I just called him—he was having his Christmas party—I called him and told him how proud I was of the statement. I told him that it was—I thought it was fabulous. I told him I wasn't sure I could have done it as well as he did. It was just fabulous. And he laughed. Al's got a friend that he went to college with who is a standup comic, and he says his best line now is something like, "Gore got the best of all worlds: He won the popular vote and doesn't have to do the job." It's a great line.

Northern Ireland Peace Process

Q. [*Inaudible*]—where they have to go now—a lot of it in our country seems to be reconciliation, reconciliation for the U.S., as is typical in a Presidential race, reconciliation for the issues that you had to face in the last couple of years, reconciliation for Catholics and Protestants, what would you take away from that? What advice would you give to somebody——

The President. To the Irish? Well, they have to keep working together. For example, it's hard for us as outsiders to appreciate the significance of that event yesterday. But in that event yesterday, you had huge numbers of Catholics and huge numbers of Protestants sitting in a room together, a big room, clapping at the same lines. Now, that seems like self-evident, say, "Well, it's almost like the rhetoric of peace, and so what's the deal here?"

But I'm not sure even 2 years ago we could have gotten that big a crowd from both communities, from the young to the old—the kids would have done it that were there yesterday, but all the adults, I don't know that we could have done it, even 2 years ago. So, I really believe this is largely a question of sustained personal contact.

Their interests are clearly far more served by what they have in common than their differences. They just have to continue to build trust. All these issues that they're debating now are basically trust issues.

Immigration in Ireland

Q. In regard to that, the Celtic Tiger, the economy that's going so strong—but a new component in Ireland is the idea of immigration to their country, and the eight people killed in Ireland, immigrants, last year——

The President. It's going to be a whole new challenge for them because they're—it's funny, the Irish have emigrated all over the world, and I don't believe there has been day since the United Nations sent its first peacekeeping force out that there hasn't been an Irish peacekeeper somewhere around the world involved in peacekeeping efforts. It's stunning.

So, there is no nation on Earth as small as Ireland that has had the impact and the outreach Ireland has had to the rest of the world, partly because they had to come to America to live, the Potato Famine and later, and significant numbers of them were still coming when I became President. You know, there were an enormous number of nurses in Arkansas from Northern Ireland when I was Governor.

Q. Which they'd like back now.

The President. Yes, which they would like back now, and they may want to go home because they can make decent money now, but they never had the reverse happen. Saint Patrick was an Englishman. He was practically the last significant immigrant into Ireland, if you think about it. I mean, he was an Englishman. There had never been a huge in-migration. So, you know, it's tragic that those people were killed, but they're dealing—this is going to be a whole new experience for them.

It's not like London. England has had—I saw some of this when I was a student in England in the late sixties and 1970. They had—what was that guy's name—I never thought I would forget that rightwing politician's name that was leading all the anti-immigrant stuff?

Q. In America?

The President. In Great Britain. I can't believe I've forgotten his name. But the point is, there was all this early tension. Now you walk the streets of London, and the immigrants are there. They're all intermarried, but they still have their communities and their traditions. There are movies being made now about kind of like—I saw a great movie on the plane about a—a British movie about a Pakistani family, about the Pakistani family trying to preserve its traditions and cultures, a Pakistani husband and English wife, but he wants his kids all to have proper Muslim marriages with other Pakistani families. All those things that are—they're still playing themselves out. But they're operating at a highly, I think, functional level now compared to 30 years ago.

The Irish will work through this. They're basically incredibly generous, spirited people, but they have had a very distinct Irish culture and mentality for hundreds of years. And with the economic success of the Irish Republic now and the romantic appeal of Ireland and the great lifestyle—and Dublin is a fabulous city, you know; it's big enough to be fascinating and not too big to be overwhelming—they're going to have a lot of people who want to live there.

Q. Did Chelsea like it?

The President. Oh, Chelsea loves Dublin. Chelsea loves Ireland. Chelsea loved Ireland before I ever got involved in all of this. She was reading Irish historical novels when she was a kid.

Q. Would she go to grad school there?

The President. I don't know. But if she did, it would be fine with me. It would give me an excuse to go back.

But I think the Irish will do fine with this. They will just have to work through it. I don't think people should be too judgmental or alarmist because this is an experience they're dealing with that the Americans had to begin dealing with at the turn of the century when we had our big wave of immigrants, or even before, when the Chinese came to build the railroad, and the British dealt with, in the middle of this century, the last century, up through the 1960's and the early seventies. And they're dealing with it.

You know, so you will have some of this stuff happen. It's terrible and regrettable, but they will absorb them. And I think it will be quite amazing 10 years from now to go there and see all these people with different colored skin quoting Yeats' poetry.

President's Future Plans

Q. Mr. President, did this trip, and the fact that there is now a President-elect, cement your thoughts about your own future any more?

The President. Not really. I'm thinking about it. I need to get a little sleep here. I've worked pretty hard for the last 8 years, for the last 27 years, and I'm going to just—I want to try to be a useful citizen. But I will—I've got to build that library. I've got a lot of things to do.

Q. So, you're tired. Does that mean that this is your last foreign trip? You don't have that look about you, sir?

Q. We could do this all the way to North Korea.

The President. I don't have anything to say about that now. [*Laughter*] I can't comment on that.

Q. I do have an example of Irish generosity, if you will hold on for just a second.

The President. Do it.

President-Elect Bush

Q. Some people are comparing George Bush to you, saying that he has the same type of—[*inaudible*]. Do you see that in him?

The President. Well, I think he's, you know, trying to build good will, which I think is important. And maybe the last few years have bled enough poison out of the system where it will be possible. And I think the Democrats, anyway,

are more generally inclined toward working—you know, we basically believe in Government. We believe in the possibility of doing things. And so I think that the Democrats will give him a honeymoon and an opportunity to get his feet on the ground and pass some of his program and do some things. And I think they ought to.

Discussions With Queen Elizabeth II

Q. Can I ask you about the visit with the Queen? You were saying earlier that you actually discussed a little bit of politics.

The President. Yes. She's very careful, you know. She observes strictly the British tradition of not making policy statements. But she's a highly intelligent woman who knows a lot about the world. She has traveled a lot. She has fulfilled her responsibilities, I think, enormously well, and I always marvel, when we meet, at what a keen judge she is of human events. I think she's a very impressive person. I like her very much.

Q. Did you have tea?

The President. We had tea. We had proper tea, yes. Actually, I had a little coffee, but Hillary had tea.

Souvenir Presentation

[*At this point, a reporter presented the President with a box of tea.*]

Q. Last time I went to Ireland with Hillary, she liked that.

The President. Yes, we do like this.

Q. And because you won't be having this, I think you deserve a little memory of your time. [*Laughter*]

The President. Believe it or not, I don't have one of these.

Q. You can keep the limo and play with that, you know, up on the desk.

The President. What I need is an automated tape of "Hail to the Chief" so I know when I'm going into a room that I won't be lost. [*Laughter*] This is great. Thank you.

Supreme Court Decision on Election

Q. Mr. President, you said in your statement this morning that the Vice President spoke for a lot of people who disagreed with the Supreme Court decision. Is there a way——

The President. But accept it. I agree with both the things he said. He said it just right. Is there a way what?

Q. Do you think, though, there is the sense that the Court was political or is—and that is bad for the country that the Court ever got involved in deciding the election?

The President. I think that the statements of the Vice President and the President-elect should stand on their own, and at this time I should not say anything about it. I think it's just—I don't think I should comment on it now.

Q. You said on Saturday that in order to bestow legitimacy on the President-elect, the Supreme Court should allow the vote. Do you not feel that same way now?

The President. No, I said I disagree with the Court decision, but I accept it. The right of judicial review established by John Marshall in *Marbury* against *Madison*, then involving review of executive actions of the President, has been extended to every other aspect of our law wherever there is a Federal question involved.

And somebody has to make the final call. And the American people obviously make their judgments about it. And the Court, as you know, often had different positions than they do now, that we've been through a lot of, you know, a lot of cycles of this. Remember, the Supreme Court struck down all the New Deal legislation until 1937. Then they turned around, and they changed.

Plessy v. *Ferguson* was the law until the Warren Court came along and basically redeemed the promise of the Civil War and the 13th and 14th and 15th amendments. Before Abraham Lincoln and the war and the amendments, the Supreme Court said in the Dred Scott case that even a freed slave that—I mean a slave that escaped to a free State was still property.

So, the Supreme Court—people can make their judgments there. No one looking back on history would say that every decision they have made is right. We could all find ones we agree and disagree with. But the principle of judicial review is very important in this country, and therefore we must all accept the decisions we don't agree with.

Q. Justice Stevens, in his dissent, said the one loser here is—I'm paraphrasing, obviously—the belief of Americans in a nonpolitical unbiased nature of the Court. [*Inaudible*] Is that what he said?

The President. I just don't want to comment on it. I don't think—I can serve no purpose by commenting on it. If I did, I would not be honoring what Vice President Gore said he

wanted us to do in his speech and what President-elect Bush said he was trying to establish in the country.

There will be time enough to comment on it. And a lot of law professors and other people who understand the history of the Constitution will comment on it. And the American people will read it and discuss it. And at some future time, it might be appropriate for me to put down somewhere my thoughts about it. But I don't think it's right, now. I think that this is a period when we ought to let—get the country going forward and give the President-elect a chance to put his transition in order. That's what's best for the country, and I want to honor that.

Visits to Ireland

Q. What was your favorite trip to Ireland?

The President. My favorite trip to Ireland? It's very hard. But the first time I went—I loved '98. I loved Limerick. You know, that was great when we went there.

Q. Not to mention Ballybunion?

The President. Not to mention Ballybunion, yes, which I missed because of Bosnia. You remember, in '95, I had to go see our troops off in Germany. I think I went to Ramstein in Germany.

But in '95 it was like a dam breaking. You know, the emotion, the feeling for peace. Keep in mind, things were much more uncertain then. We had a good cease-fire, but we were still 3 years away from the Good Friday accord, or 2½ years. It was the end of '95 when I went, and then the spring of '98 was the Good Friday accord. But you know, I never will forget being in Derry, turning on the Christmas lights in Belfast with—who was singing there?

Q. Van Morrison.

The President. Van Morrison was singing there, and then I went to Derry, and Phil Coulter sang "The Town I Love So Well" in the square with all the people filling the square, and then that street that goes up the hill behind it as far as you could see.

I mean, there wasn't a dry eye in the place, you know. I mean, I just can't—and then we went to Dublin. There were over 100,000 people in the streets in front of Trinity. We set up on the bank, you know, in front of the Bank of Ireland building—it was just amazing; there were a lot of interesting people—and quoted Seamus Heaney's poem, you know, from the "Cure of Troy," for which the next year I took a phrase and made it the title of the book I put out in '96.

And when I got to Dublin, Seamus came over to the Ambassador's residence and had handwritten out the section of the poem that I quoted. It's what the chorus says, "History says don't hope on this side of the grave. But once in a lifetime the longed-for tidal wave of justice can rise up, and hope and history rhyme. Believe in miracles and cures and healing wells." I have it on the wall in my private office on the second floor, and I look at it every day.

And so he wrote it out in his hand, and then at the end he said, "To President Clinton: It was a fortunate wind that blew you here," and that line is also from the "Cure of Troy," which I would have every person involved in any of these kinds of things read.

It's only about 90 pages long, and it's a play written in the form of a Greek tragedy so that the chorus speaks for the collective wisdom of the people. It's a play about Philoctetes, who was a Greek warrior with Ulysses. He had the magic bow, and whenever the Greeks have Philoctetes in the Trojan Wars, they always won. They never lost a battle when he was there.

And they were in a battle, and he was badly wounded. And they thought he was certain to die. His leg was horribly wounded, and they were afraid to carry him. And they were trying to make a quick getaway. So they dumped him on this tiny island in the Aegean, which was just basically rock and shrub. And he didn't die, and his leg never fully healed. It just sort of became a stump.

And for 10 years, he was alone on the island. He became this sort of wild feral creature, just hair everywhere and his stump leg. And Odysseus got a message for the gods—Ulysses did—that Philoctetes was alive and that he had to have him to win the final battle of the Trojan War with the famous Trojan Horse.

So, he—Ulysses devised this ruse to try to con him back into the deal. He took a very nice young man with him on a boat, and they found this island, and he sent the young guy up to see him. And he had some line he put on him about—he figured out there was something wrong; this didn't make sense; this guy appears after 10 years.

So finally Ulysses kind of fessed up, went up and said, "I left you. I shouldn't have. I'm sorry, but we need you. Will you come?" And

he forgives him, and he comes. He gets his magic bow, and he limps down to the boat, and they go off, and they win the Trojan War.

So, it's a story about how this guy is living alone on this God-forsaken rock while his leg never heals, and yet somehow what happened to him over those 10 years, he just gives it up. And he goes on. And when he is leaving, as he is pulling out of the—you know, away from the island, the three of them in the boat—Philoctetes looks back at the island and says, "It was a fortunate wind that blew me here."

But he somehow, in that 10 years, just purged his soul. I mean, it's really—all the things Seamus ever wrote for the peace process in Northern Ireland and for people struggling with tribal wars in Africa or any of these conflicts, or people that are still mad at each other—you know, when I got to Washington, there were Members of Congress still mad at each other over things that happened in the 1970's, literally, still mad. And you know, there were times when I felt like a piñata in somebody else's ballgame.

So you know, when I read this—I remember I read it one night in the Presidential guest residence in Cairo. I had been carrying it around with me, and you know, my body clock was all messed up, and I couldn't sleep. So Hillary went to sleep, and I just sat up and read it. And I thought, "Wow, this is really—I wish I could just get everybody to read this."

Q. Cairo was—[*inaudible*].

The President. Well, whenever—one of the times I was in Cairo. The one thing about me, I have a reputation for having a good memory, but it's totally shot. I literally—I remember things that we did now, and I can't remember what year we did them. And if I'm going to write my memoirs, I'm going to have to get all these young people that work for me to come in and sort of fill in the blanks.

So much has happened in such a compressed way. On a deal like this, you know, maybe I get 3 hours of sleep a night. I just can't remember things, or I remember things, but I don't remember exactly when they happened.

Q. Why did an Irish playwright write a Greek tragedy?

The President. I think that he believed that it was a simple, clear way to capture some timeless wisdom that would speak to Ireland and maybe to others in the same position.

It's really an astonishing work, you know, because if you read it—if you didn't know anything about it, you would think, "Is this some play of Aeschylus I missed when I was in Greek Literature 101 or something?"

Northern Ireland/Middle East

Q. Before you leave office, do you think that there will be a sense of permanency—[*inaudible*]?

The President. That's what I was trying to say in the beginning. I think that it's creeping in. And I think that the psychological impact of this visit, more than anything else, was designed to help create that. But I think there will be rough spots along the road. I think there will be arguments back and forth.

Q. Do you think there will be—[*inaudible*]?

The President. No, I think they will still have arguments. I just don't think they will ever let it slip the tracks.

Q. Do you think that the policing and decommissioning—[*inaudible*]—have some kind of common ground—[*inaudible*]?

The President. I think they're moving on them. Whether they will be resolved or not, I don't know. But the main thing is, I think every time you do something that really builds confidence and mutual trust, at least if they think—both sides think that they want to make it, you know, then it's—you increase the likelihood of success one way or the other. And the time deadlines don't matter so much.

I'm more concerned about, you know, giving that sense again to the Middle East. We had that sense for a while, and then Rabin got killed, and then we had those two terrible terrorist incidents, and the whole Middle East rallied around the Israelis at Sharm al-Sheikh, totally unprecedented, never happened before.

And then there was this sense of possibility again. And then, even with all the difficulties they had with the Netanyahu government, the differences of opinion wound up producing the Wye accords. It was 9 days and nights, and it was sort of like the last person standing won the argument, but it was—they did it. There was a sense of it. That's what they need again. They need a sense that, you know, the direction is right, and it's going to work.

Q. [*Inaudible*]—some Israelis suggest that you will go back there and give it one more shot.

The President. I don't want to comment on that either. I don't want to comment on that

or North Korea, because all these things are very delicate. The less I say, the better it is for them and for whatever I can do and for the next President.

Q. Were you surprised by Prime Minister Barak's resignation—[*inaudible*]?

The President. Well, sort of, but you know it's—it's all been written about. Everybody knows kind of what's going on. I think he decided that he wanted to bring some finality to it. He wanted to have some deadline, some election, whether either his course will be ratified or something will happen. I think it was—it's a bold move. We will have to see how it works.

Q. [*Inaudible*]—mentioned that Jim Baker being back on the scene—remembered that he was the one that uttered that you were working on "Gulliver's Travels" in 1996, regarding your work in Northern Ireland. Do you think he owes you an apology for that statement?

The President. I don't know. I don't make judgments about—I think when it comes to apologies, you ought to save your judgments for yourself—to whom should you apologize, and let other people make those decisions. I think that, look, nobody is right about everything. He is an immensely talented man. And I think the course is right, now. And I think the fact that I'm leaving the scene is not—won't be significant. I just don't think they will let it go.

Q. Do you think Hillary will take up where you left off in Washington?

The President. Well, she will be a Senator, not President, but I think that she will be passionately interested in the Irish question. And she is kind of like me—although, unlike me, she has no Irish relatives. Her people are English and Welsh, but she is very familiar with Great Britain. She made all my trips there, and I think she will be a very positive force.

And of course, we've got that huge Irish crowd in New York. They were the people that really introduced me to the Irish issues—the New York Irish and Bruce Morrison from New Haven, who had been a friend of Hillary's and mine since we went to law school together, and the late Paul O'Dwyer and his son—Niall O'Dowd, that whole crowd.

Q. [*Inaudible*]—the Irish Echo.

The President. The Irish Echo, yes. They were there at the beginning, my first meeting in 1991. We had that little meeting, you know. And I thought, you know, it makes a lot of sense to me. I will do something on this. I will pander to her. I don't mind. I will give her the pander. Hey, I'm leaving. I'll pander. [*Laughter*]

President's Travel/Foreign Policy

Q. What was your favorite trip outside of Ireland?

The President. I don't know. I loved so many of them. I loved that trip to India. I loved my trip to China. I loved the—the Africa trip was amazing. There was a Guinean woman—you were standing there on the street today; you were there with me—when we were walking down, you know, on Portobello Road. Did you see that woman come up to me and say, *Aproba, aproba, aproba*? That's the Guinean word for welcome. I said, "Were you there?" She said, "I was there. I was there in the square." It was so touching. It was wonderful.

I think it's really important that the United States have a sort of 21st century view of what really counts in the world. I think that Africa has to count for us. I think that Latin America has to count for us.

I think President-elect Bush, I think, will be very, very good in Latin America. One of the things that I noticed about him that I liked, during all the years when I fought the Republicans in Congress and in California over immigration issues, he never got over there with them. And it's probably the only issue on which Texas Republicans are more liberal or less conservative than California Republicans. And it's because of the whole history and culture of the Rio Grande Valley, which I love very much. I went down there 30 years ago, and I've always loved it. I think I was the first President in 50 years, almost, to go down there as President. And I have been three times to the Rio Grande Valley. And you can't understand how Texans feel about immigration if you've never spent any time in the Rio Grande Valley and understand how it works for them. It's a whole different deal.

And he will be very comfortable. He will be good with Mexico. And I think it will lead him to an interest in not only in the big countries of South America but, I would hope, the small countries of Central America, too. But I expect he will be quite successful in building on the outreach we've done in the Latin American countries.

It's going to be important. That's the point I was trying to make today in my speech at

Warwick. As the world becomes more interdependent, pursuing our interests involves more than great power politics.

It's like in the Middle East. Now, I think pursuing our interests involves having a good relationship with the Saudis and, insofar as we can, the other oil producers, except for Iraq, where I just don't think—I think they're still unreconstructed.

But it also involves caring about the Palestinians. Life is more than money and power. And ideas are power, and emotions are power. I have tried to reconcile the legitimate desires of both the Israelis and the Palestinians. We didn't succeed yet, but we—I think that in the end, if we want Israel to be fully secure and at peace in the Middle East, the Palestinian question has to be resolved in a way that enables them, actually, not only to live but to actually start, you know, having a successful economy and a functioning society.

I've got to go. It's been interesting.

I can't really say I had a favorite trip because all of them, you know, I can remember too many things about them all.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:55 p.m. e.s.t aboard Air Force One en route from the United Kingdom to Andrews Air Force Base, MD. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Tony Blair and former Prime Minister John Major of the United Kingdom; First Minister David Trimble of Northern Ireland; musicians Van Morrison and Phil Coulter; former Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu of Israel; and Niall O'Dowd, publisher, The Irish Voice.

Statement on the Release of Edmond Pope
December 14, 2000

I welcome today's release of Edmond Pope after 8 months of detention in Russia and appreciate President Putin's decision to pardon Mr. Pope.

Mr. Pope's ordeal was unjustified. It is fortunate that humanitarian considerations prevailed in the end.

I admire the impressive support Mr. Pope received from his wife and family and from Congressman John Peterson of Pennsylvania and other Members of Congress. I commend their tireless efforts on his behalf.

Statement on the 2000 Monitoring the Future Survey
December 14, 2000

Today's 2000 Monitoring the Future Survey confirms that we are making real progress in our fight against youth drug and tobacco use. The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) study released by Secretary Donna Shalala and Office of National Drug Control Policy Director Barry McCaffrey shows teen cigarette use falling sharply across all grades surveyed. The percentage of teenagers reporting cigarette use in the past month dropped by nearly 10 percent among high school seniors, and over 15 percent among eighth graders. The study also shows that efforts to change student attitudes on tobacco are having a positive impact: More teens now believe that smoking carries risks, while fewer report that cigarettes are readily available. This year also marks the fourth in a row that overall teenage use of illicit drugs has remained stable or declined. In particular, the data shows a significant drop in cocaine use among high school seniors and heroin use among eighth graders in 2000. In combination with the National Household and PRIDE surveys this year, these results demonstrate a continuing downward trend in overall youth drug use.